

## WHAT IS ANCHORAGE'S AIR QUALITY STATUS NOW?

After 25 years of non-compliance with federal clean air standards, the Environmental Protection Agency designated Anchorage as an area that officially meets the CO standard in 2004. However, with a growing population and an increasing number of vehicles, we can't afford to decrease our vigilance.

## HOW ELSE CAN I IMPROVE AIR QUALITY?

- Don't be a SOV (single occupancy vehicle.) For free, confidential rideshare matching for carpool or vanpool, call the Share-A-Ride program at 562-7665, or register to find your carpool partner online at [www.peoplemover.org](http://www.peoplemover.org).

- Forget the window scraping and slippery streets; take the bus to work or use it for errands during the day and keep your parking place. Visit [www.peoplemover.org](http://www.peoplemover.org) for your travel choices.
- Think ahead to 'link' your trips and combine errands to minimize cold starts.
- Maintain your car for better startability, mileage, emissions and wear.
- Businesses, organizations and schools can work toward a Green Star Air Quality Award by reducing air emissions from travel and operations. See [www.greenstarinc.org](http://www.greenstarinc.org).
- Consider natural gas rather than wood for auxiliary heating from a fireplace.



PLUGAT20.ORG

Municipal Department of Health  
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## FOR YOUR CAR

Start-up is the period of maximum engine wear and minimum fuel efficiency, especially for cold engines. Some of the fuel that goes into cold engines blows past the rings and into the crankcase, where it dilutes lubricating oil and increases engine wear, especially on rings and bearings. Plugging-in increases fuel efficiency and reduces wear by helping engines warm faster.

## FOR THE AIR

Studies show that plugging-in cuts carbon monoxide (CO) emissions from cold starts by an average of 60 percent. Using your block heater also reduces emissions of other air pollutants, including hydrocarbons, fine particles and toxic air pollutants.

## FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD

On days with temperature inversions or little wind, pollution from vehicle cold starts and idling disperses very slowly. Some of the highest CO levels in Anchorage are found during the morning hours in neighborhoods where cars are started cold after parking outside overnight.

## WHAT DOES IT COST TO USE A BLOCK HEATER?

Plugging - in for two to three hours before your morning commute costs just 10 to 25 cents. This cost may be offset somewhat by reducing the gas consumed in heating your car's engine. National Resources Canada estimates that block heater use can

improve overall winter fuel economy by as much as 10 percent. Using a programmable timer set to turn your block heater on two to three hours before your morning commute will also save electricity.

## WHEN SHOULD I USE A BLOCK HEATER?

A third of Anchorage CO violations occur when temperatures were above 15°F. You can improve your car's performance and reduce fuel consumption and pollution by avoiding colds starts whenever the temperature is 20°F or colder. Please remember to Plug@20.

This publication, released by the Municipality of Anchorage Department of Health and Human Services, was produced at a cost of \$0.55 per copy by Northern Printing, Anchorage, AK for the purpose of encouraging block heater use to reduce carbon monoxide emissions from vehicles.

